

The QUAKERS Vindicated from the Calumnies of those that failly accuse them as if they *Denied* MAGISTRATES, and *Disowned* GOVERNMENT; And as if both in Principle and Practice they were inconsistent with either.

In which is shewed,

That the true and sincere *Quakers* (so called, for of them I write) are in the Spirit and Principle in which the Justice of Magistrates is obeyed, and in which Magistrates are to administer their Government, and that by their practice in good works they fulfill all just and good Government.

And that they have God's Authority for their meeting together to worship Him, and the Name of *Christ* (which is above every name) to meet in; And that their Worship in Spirit is allowed by the Scriptures of Truth, and the practice of the Primitive Christians, which was before either the *Liturgie* or the *Masse-book* was.

And that people in the matters of Religion and the Worship of God, should rather be instructed and led by the Spirit of the Lord in Gods Authority, than driven by the terrour of Magistrates, and forc'd by the penalties and punishments of the outward Laws of Men.

Also, several *Objections* answered, as to the exercise of Secular force and compulsion over the Conscience in matters of Faith, Religion, and the Worship of God.

By EDWARD PROT.

But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgressions, and to Israel his sin. Hear this, I pray you, ye Heads of the house of Jacob, and Princes of the house of Israel, that abhor Judgment, and pervert all Equity; they build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. Mich. 3. 8, 9, 10.

Knowing this, that the Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and prophane, &c. 1 Tim. 1. 9, 10.

The Quakers vindicated from the Calumnies of those that falsely accuse them as if they denied Magistrates, and disowned Government, &c.

IT is no strange thing if there be a talk among some people, that the *Quakers* (so called) do deny Magistrates and disown Government; for such there were in the times of Christ and of his Apostles, who, of malice some, and others of ignorance, slandered both Christ and his Apostles, and the most sincere Christians of all Ages since, with such false accusations and scandalous reports: it was through envy and slander that Christ was by the *Jews* delivered as a Malefactor in this kind, as *Pilate* well knew, whom the chief Priest, the Elders and Scribes, with their multitude, accused of perverting the Nations, and forbidding to pay Tribute to *Cesar*, and of stirring up the people; and this they did under pretence of friendship to *Cesar*, who in their hearts they hated; they told *Pilate* that he was not *Cesar's* friend if he let him go, when he sought to release him, as finding no fault in him, and cryed for *Barrabas* to be released, who did indeed prevert the people, and made Insurrection, and committed Murder in the Insurrection, and for Sedition and Murder was cast into Prison. And they laid in many great & grievous complaints against the Apostles, as touching the Law of the *Jews*, and of moving Sedition, and of turning the world upside down; and they accused them of doing contrary to the Decrees of *Cesar*. And the Christians in after-times were said to be seditious and rebellious; and pernicious to the Emperour; and whatsoever evils happened among the people, they were imputed to the Christians as the causers thereof. Thus the most sincere Christians of their times, have been scandalized, defamed, and envied to Righteousness, have endeavoured by all ways and means to bring the most Innocent and upright People into contempt with their Rulers, and to possess the ignorant people with prejudice against them; that having rendred them infamous and dangerous, they might be persecuted as such: and as such, many have unjustly suffered by their Rulers, and by the mis-led people have been disregarded and had in base esteem, and accounted as the fifth of the world, and as the off-scouring of all things.

And therefore it is no strange thing, if the most sincere Christians

of these times, that are now reproachfully called *Quakers*, and *Sectaries*, and their Ministers *Ringleaders*, (as the Christians in the Apostles times were called *Nazarens*, and termed a *Sect*, and their Ministers *Ringleaders*) be now slandered and defamed, as if they denyed Magistrates, and disowned Government, and were in their principle and practice inconsistent with both, by the scandalous reports of some, who through their envy to Godliness and Sincerity, have evilly surmised and hatched such things, without any cause given, whereby the Rulers also have been incensed against the Innocent, as a People disaffected to Government.

And this subtle and malicious working was in *Oliver's* dayes as well as now, and hath been through all the late Changes; although the *Quakers* never gave occasion to any, yet occasions have been taken against them by all, and they have been made offenders, and have deeply suffered by all, who never justly offended any, nor are in principle or practice prejudicial to either Government or Governours, but are for the establishment of both, according to the Ordinance of God; and by their honest conversation (which is according to the will of God in well-doing, which well becometh good Government) they do answer the end of Government; and their Principle teacheth them, according to the will of God, to submit themselves to every Ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; and they know it to be the will of God concerning them, that they may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, according as *Peter* writeth to the Christians that were scattered abroad in several parts, *That they should be of honest conversation among the Gentiles, and submit themselves to every Ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the King as Supreme, or unto Governors, as unto them that are sent of him, for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well; and that this to do, was the will of God concerning them, that with well-doing they might put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.*

And if well-doing (which indeed is an honour to Government, and not a disowning of it, and which deserves the Magistrates praise, and therefore is no denying them) was a sufficient ground to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, in this matter, as to the Christians in the Apostles times; why may not the well-doing of the *Quakers* now (who as to their honest conversation, innocent life and quiet behaviour towards both Rulers and People, have a large testimony in the consciences of all that know them) be a sufficient ground to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, as to this matter, in this our day? And those who so bewray their ignorance, as thus to talk, may not unfitly be termed *foolish men*: for what reason is there for just and righteous

men to disown Government, that to say, just and righteous Government, that are so obedient to the Government of God's Spirit ruling in them, (which Spirit of God is to govern Governours in their Governments) as that their conversation is so according to good Government, as that good Government hath no Law against them?

What reason is there for people, that are subject to the Government of God, to be against the Government of men, if they rule according to God, whose Kingdom is to rule over all, and that administer their Government for the Lords sake, for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well? for although unrighteous Rulers, who know not the Lord to rule over them and by them, nor are subject to his Power in their Governments, by their corrupt rule and misgovernment, and abuse of their Power, do persecute the Innocent, that obey the Government of God, for their Righteousness sake; yet the Government of men, by the Ordinance of God, is not to push against the Government of God in his People, that are of his own Household and Family, and under his own Government, in whom his Kingdom is come, and his Will is done; who know the Lord to be their Ruler, and are subject unto his Power and Rule in them and over them, and obey him as their King, their Lawgiver and Judge, who by their obedience to the Reign and Government of God, do answer and fulfil the just and good Government of men? and therefore there is no reason for the *Quakers*, who are under the Government of God, to be against the Government of men, that rule according to the Ordinance of God.

Again, Rulers are not to be a terror to good works, but their Sword is to be turned against the evil, and they are to minister their good to well-doers; and therefore those who are redeemed from their evil-deeds, which the Power of God in Rulers is God's Sword to punish, they need not to fear the Power, the occasion of the Sword being subdued in them by the Power of their Redeemer: but the People called *Quakers*, are redeemed from the evil deeds, which the Sword of the Magistrate is to punish, so that they are not chargeable by any, to be conversant therein; for, they having renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, are not found in criminal offences; nor are they by the soberest of men, charged with any ungodly or vicious living, to which the Magistrate is to be a terrour; And therefore the *Quakers* need not to fear the Power, which to Magistrates is given by God, for the punishment of evil-doers only, and not to punish well-doers, the occasion of the Sword being subdued in them by the Power of their Redeemer, who breaks in pieces (and hath broken in them) the power

and rule of darkness, which keeps in transgression, and subdues the transgressor, and keeps out of transgression; unto whose Power in them (which is the *Higher Power*, in which Rulers are to govern, that over-rules and rules over the power and rule of darkness, and that chains down the evil-doer and restrains his evil deeds) their souls are subject.

Again. Rulers, by the Ordinance of God, are to minister their good to well-doers; and therefore those who are in the exercise of good-works, by the power of their Head *Christ Jesus*, working in them, (who is the Head of all Principalities and Power; of whom alone is all the just Authority and Rule that is derived unto the Rulers of all Nations, and by whose Power Rulers are to govern) his Power in their Governments, is for their praise, who by his Power in them are exercised in good-works, which good-works are the fulfilling of good Government, and unto which good Governours are a praise: But the *Quakers* are a People that are exercised in good works, by the power of their Head *Christ Jesus* working in them, so as that they are an example of good works at this day in the Nation, the proof of which they have in the consciences of all sober People; and therefore Magistrates are to minister their good unto the *Quakers* as unto well-doers, and to protect and encourage them in their well-doing: For the Power of *Christ*, as it rules in Government, is for their praise, who by his Power in them are exercised in good works; which good works are the fulfilling of good Government, and unto which good Governours are a praise, as it is written, *Wilt thou then not be afraid of the Power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the Minister of God to thee for good.*

Those who (in the Divine and Spiritual Light of their Creator) are subject to the righteous Law of their Maker, which in their hearts is written from their creation, the Law of the Creation, which from the beginning hath been given by God, in common to all Nations (before the Law of *Moses* to the *Jews* was given) the Creators Law to his creatures; and as their Sovereign Lord, over all Sovereignty and Lordship, his Law, for the government of the Creation, and so the Common-Law of all Nations, according to which the Nations by their Rulers are to be governed, as the *Jews* by their Rulers were to be governed according to the Law of *Moses*; these, by their obedience to the righteous Law of God, they obey the righteous Laws of men, for conscience-sake, and submit to every Ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; and so their obedience to the Laws of men, and their submission to every Ordinance of man, is without the force of the Law, or the

wrath of man, for which they merit of the Magistrate his praise, and the Laws protection, for their encouragement in their well-doing.

For in the Law of God is contained the true principles of all Law and Justice, that by Rulers in their Governments is to be administered; and every Ordinance of man, viz. the Magistracy and Government of every Nation is to be composed and constituted, according to the Law of God, and by the Law of God, as their principle, and their inward guide, their Laws, their Judgments and Sentences are to be directed and regulated; And therefore those, who are subject to the righteous Law of God, (the record of which is written in their hearts) they keep the Laws of men, and every Ordinance of man, that is according to the Law of God and his Ordinance: for the Laws of men are not to derogate from the Law of God, nor is any Ordinance of man, so to be of man, as not to be of God; for the motive to submit to every Ordinance of man, is, *for the Lord's sake*; and therefore every Ordinance of man, in their original, must be of God, and of man only formally, as by man composed and constituted; And as every Ordinance is of man, so every Ordinance must by man be ordained for the Lords sake, that so every Ordinance of man may be submitted unto for the Lord's sake, (as it is written) *Per. 2. 13, 14. Submit your selves to every Ordinance of man for the Lords sake, whether it be to the King, as Supreme; or unto Governours, as unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well.*

And those who are subject to the Power of God, as the Power of God reigns in their souls, and bears rule over their whole man, (which Power of God is the *Higher Power*, unto which every soul is to be subject, as well the Rulers in their Rule, as the Ruled in their Obedience) they must needs be subject to the Government of the same Power of God, as it reigns in the souls of their Rulers, and as it bears the Rule in their Governments: for the Power of God, which is to reign and rule in every mans own particular, is the same which is to reign and rule in the Governments of men; else how are they condemned in themselves who resist the Power as it rules in Government, *Rom. 13. 2. It is the reign of the Power to condemnation in them that resist, that condemns them for their resisting the Rule of the Power as it reigns in Government*; And therefore those that are subject to the reign of the Power of God, as it rules in themselves, they must needs be subject to the Rule of the Power of God as it reigns in the Governments of men.

But the *Quakers* are subject to the Power of God, and in their souls the Power of God reigns, and bears the rule over their whole man;

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and therefore the *Quakers* must needs be subject, &c. And for Conscience-sake they are subject to the Governments of the same Power of God, as it reigns in their Rulers, and as it rules in their Governments; neither dare they resist the Power of God in their Rulers, lest the Power of God in themselves be their condemnation.

But rather, that by the Regal Reign and Rule of the Power of God in themselves, they may be so regulated, and their wayes so bounded unto the Lord, as that within the limits of the Power they may be preserved to answer the same in their Rulers; and their conversations in the fear of God so ordered, and by his Wisdom and in his Counsel so directed and governed, that as the same rules and guides in their Rulers, they be found regular with all just and good Government; and that in the Dominion of the same Power of God reigning in them, by which Kings reign, themselves in the Power may reign, as Kings on Earth, over all unrighteousness; And that by the Sovereign Conduct of the same Wisdom of God, dictating and prescribing to them, by which Princes decree Justice, they may be led in the wayes of Righteousness, and guided in the midst of the paths of Judgment, and the glorious Lord be unto them a place of broad Rivers and Streams, and their Judge their Lawgiver and their King.

And so they being subject to the Power of God in themselves, how can they resist its rule in their Rulers? And their conversations being guided by the Counsel of God in themselves, how can they transgress its conduct in Governments? Nay, but when Government is reduced to its true principle and first foundation, and as Governours are restored to their just and primitive Judicature, *Isa. 1. 26. & 60. 17.* that *Judgment returns to Righteousness* as its principle, (the Principle of Justice, which is of God, the gift of God, in which Judgement is to be executed) *when Mercy and Truth meet, and Righteousness and Peace kisse each other. For Righteousness shall look down from Heaven, and Truth spring out of the Earth; and Judgment run down as Waters, and Righteousness as a mighty Stream;* And when the Power of God only shall be the strength of Rulers, and the Authority and Ability of their Rule, and God's Wisdom their Guide, and his Justice their Principle in their Governments and administration of their Laws, and Gods Presence with them their Confidence and the stability of their times, and not the Arm of flesh and Force of man, nor sensual subtilty and craft; I say, when these things are accomplished, and God's Promises fulfilled as to the Governments both of Nations and Families; And the day hastneth in which Iniquity shall have an end: for the Lord hath overturned, and is overturning, and will overturn, until he come

whose right it is (and his day is begun, in which he rules in the midst of his Enemies, and will wound the heads over many Countries, who in their hearts say, *There is none other but we*) though darkned to many by the clouds in which he comes. And then the *Quakers*, as in their own consciences they are now clear in the sight of God as to their owning of Magistrates, and submitting to their Governments in what righteously they can; so then shall they stand justified in the sight of men, yea even in the consciences of their greatest enemies.

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Eccl.
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And what can they now be accused of, even in these times of De-
fection and Apostacy, and the now hour and power of Darknes, in which the Sea roars and the waves thereof are let loose in upon them, and the foundations of the Earth as it were moved because of them; and if but five or more besides the houthold do meet in their own hired house to worship God, the third step in this path is Banishment; and so to worship God out of the form of their *Liturgy*, though it be in Spirit and in Truth, is by this Generation made a Crime, and worthy of Banishment, if the number of five or above, as aforesaid, do meet? for, if they do but say, *they met together to worship God*, it is evidence enough to the Court, saith the Judge, for the Jury to bring them in guilty, in order to their Sentence for Banishment. May not the wise in heart hear and perceive at what they strike, and what strikes? and *Solomons* prophetick sight fulfilled, *Eccl. 3. 16. Moreover, I saw under the Sun the place of Judgment, that wickedness was there: and the place of Righteousness, that Iniquity was there?* And but a few years since, the publick use of the *Liturgy* in Worship, was accounted disobedience to Magistrates, and was cryed against in the Pulpits.

But though they have no helper on earth, and the Power great that is risen up against them; as *Solomon* beheld the tears of them that were oppressed, and they had no comforter; *On the side of the Oppressor there was power, but they had no comforter*, *Eccl. 4. 1.* yet the Lord is with them, and is their strength; yea, and their inward consolation, and exceeding great reward in all their tribulations. And is it not God's Presence with them, the power and purity of his Appearance among them, that makes the workers of Iniquity afraid, and the Devil of his Kingdom: for, are not Meetings by fours privately, and with their doors shut, greater opportunities to contrive Insurrections, if that only were the matter and also the intent of their Meetings, than the publick Assemblies of the *Quakers* with their doors open? and experience hath sufficiently shewed, that the *Quakers* are no Plotters, except against the Devil and his wiles and devices; nor is their warfare against flesh and blood, for their weapons are spiritual.

I say, what can be said to their charge, except in the matters of the Law of their God, and what relates to his Worship and Service? And in the opposite Commandments of God and men, must not God by them be obeyed rather than men? for, is there any power or administration of Law to be submitted unto against the Lord? And shall man prescribe to God his Worship, who should not prescribe his own but by God's permission? Is not this to oppose their power to the Power of God? and to set their Judgment-seats above the Throne of God? For, are Magistrates the Governours of the immortal Souls of the Righteous? have they power over the Spirit? for, the Worship of God is
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Do not they intrench on God's Prerogative, and usurp in his Dominion, who in the matters of Religion and materials of God's Worship, do intrude outward and worldly Domination over the inward and Spiritual man? For, is the Spiritual man which judgeth all things, and is himself judged of no man, the Kingdom and Regiment of the Secular Powers? and is the Soul their Judgment-seat? are they the Lords over Conscience? have they the Dominion over the things of God, which by Christ are distinguished from the things of *Cesar*? *Mat. 22. 21.* Will they give Law to that in man which is not of man, and which they can neither protect nor punish, and from which in themselves their Laws should be given? For, is the *hidden man of the heart* punishable by man, which is not corruptible by the Devil? or, can they either save or kill the Soul? or, can they protect them from the Wrath of God, who to save themselves from the wrath of man, do in the things of God fear and hearken unto man more than unto God?

And in the matters of Religion and the Worship of God, are not people rather to be taught and led by the Spirit of God in God's Authority, than to be driven by the power of Magistrates, and forced by the penalties and punishments of outward Laws? And is that Worship acceptable to God, which for its authority hath only the force and fear of man, without the faith and fear of God? Is it the outward worship of the bodily presence and exercise only, that is so well-pleasing to God? for neither doth the force of man reach further than to the outward body; *nor can the wrath of man work the Righteousness of God*; or rather, is it not the inward and spiritual Worship in the Living Faith and renewed Spirit of God's faithful and true Worshipers, that pleaseth God? If the former, why then was not *Cain's* Sacrifice accepted? and if the latter, how then can the Laws of men, and their most severe executions, make any to worship God acceptably; because by all their force they cannot give men Faith, nor make new
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their Spirit ; for Faith is the gift of God, and to renew a right Spirit in man is the work of God ; And without Faith it is impossible to please God, Heb. 11. 6. for, *whatsoever is not of Faith is sin*, Rom. 14. 13. And it was by Faith that Abel offered a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, Heb. 11. 4.

And how can they whose Consciences are tender, and not seared as with an hot Iron, but be condemned in themselves, if by the force and fear of men and their penalties and punishments, they worship God in the way prescribed by man ; that is contrary to their Faith, and against the judgment and feeling of their own Consciences, and for which there is neither precept nor example in the Scriptures of Truth ? And if their own hearts and consciences condemn them, God is greater, 1 Job. 3. 20. And so by the exercise of Force and Punishment in Religion and Worship, are there not many made Hypocrites ? and are there not some made Hereticks ? For, they are Hypocrites which appear to be that outwardly which they are not inwardly ; and they are Hereticks who by subversion, sin, and are condemned in themselves ; so that their obedience is not for Conscience-sake, but for Wrath-sake only : And also by Force imposing things contrary to Faith and Conscience. Are not many driven out from amongst them who cannot touch any unclean thing ? And when the Lord hath received them, are they not then persecuted as Schismatics and seditious Sectories ?

And, are themselves in the Faith which worketh by Love, and which stands nor in the wisdom and strength of men, but in the power and operation of God, who by mischievous Stratagems and the Force of men would wrack the Faith of others, break their Peace, and wound their Consciences ; who in their own hearts have the answer of a good Conscience in what they do, and are in the Peace which passeth the understanding of them that hate and persecute them, and are built up in the most holy Faith, by which the Just live ? for their Meetings are in the singleness of their hearts ; and not under pretence as seditious Conventicles, but in all simplicity and godly sincerity to worship God.

And is not to persecute for righteousness-sake, Cains way ? for, was not Cain the first Persecuter ? and was not Cain of that wicked one, when in his wrath he slew his Brother, because his own works were evil and his Brother's righteous ? And are Revilings, Menacings, Striking, Stocking, Imprisoning and Banishing the Righteous for their Righteousness-sake, are these the fruits of true and sincere Christians, and the fulfilling of the Law of Love ? or, are these Cruelties of the Lord ? for David saith, *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and that he delighteth in his way*. Are these steps ordered by the Lord ? or, 2

doth the Lord delight in this way? And if the Devil be the original author of these immanities, are not then raging foming Persecuters, who travel with envy and mischief, the Devil's Agents, and the Executioners of his Wrath and Cruelties upon the Innocent? for, it is written, *Fear none of those things that thou shalt suffer; Behold, the Devil shall cast some of you into Prison, that ye may be tryed.* And Satan dwelt and had his seat, where *Antipas* God's faithful Martyr was slain; *Rev. 2. 10. 13.*

And, is the Lord their strength, and his Arm and Protection their trust and confidence, who cannot trust a poor naked and harmless people to meet together to worship God, without suspicion of contriving Insurrections? when no cause was ever given by the *Quakers* to suspect them; but only as by machination they are rendred as dangerous and seditious Sectaries, and disloyal persons; who indeed are but as Lambs among Wolves, and a prey to the beasts of the field, and do not resist the evil and the wrong that is done unto them, nor retalliate like for like; *not being overcome of evil, but overcoming evil with good*: Nor is it their principle to plot and contrive Insurrections, but patiently to bear their false Calumnies, and chearfully to suffer their cruel Oppressions; and are not ashamed of the Commandments of God, to do his will, nor of the Testimony of Christ for which they suffer; but by the Power of God are made willing to partake of the Afflictions of the Gospel; and do glory in their Tribulations, not loving their lives to the death; And loving their Enemies, and praying for their Persecuters, they commit the keeping of their Souls unto him, who in his Faith and Patience is able to keep them throughout unto Himself, in this their day of trial and hour of temptation that by the fierce and fore wrath of man is come upon them.

And, is it not as dangerous, and more disloyalty to God, for any to defame and judge Gods true Worshipers as seditious Sectaries who in the Spirit and in the Truth do worship God; and God's spiritual and holy Worship, into which by the Spirit of God they are led, to be seditious Conventicles; who is a Spirit, and the Truth, and therefore must be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth; and such spiritual and true Worshipers the Father seeks to worship him, *John 4. 23. 24.* For, is not this to defame and to judge the holy Spirit of God, by which God's true Worshipers are led, and in which they holily and spiritually do worship God, to be *seditious*, and his holy and spiritual Worship, to be *Sedition*? for is it not written, *He that speaketh evil of his Brother, and judgeth his Brother, speaketh evil of the Law, and judgeth the Law: but if thou judge the Law, thou art not a doer of the Law, but*

Are Christians to be each others Judges in the matters of Faith and Religion? or, are they to be Masters over the Consciences one of another concerning the Worship of God? Is not the Lord himself alone both the Lawgiver and Judge, as to his own Spiritual Worship and Service? for, is it not written, *There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save, and to destroy? Who art thou that judgest another?* Jam. 4. 12. And if God only be the Lawgiver and Judge, as to his own Worship and Service; is it then in the power of any living upon the face of the Earth, to prescribe to God his Worship? or for the Worship of God with man's judgement to judge his true Worshipppers? And do not they prescribe, who by their Laws and Penalties do bind and limit to a form of Worship not prescribed or limited unto by God; nor in the practice of the Apostles and primitive Christians? And do not they judge, who arraign and sentence, even to Prisons and Banishment, them that for Conscience-sake cannot submit to what by men is prescribed for the Worship of God?

And are not their Meetings of the Lord, and sealed in them to be well-pleasing in his sight, by his Presence with them and his Appearance in them and among them? for, are not the manifestations of his Spirit, and the operations of his Power in their holy Assemblies, a sure Testimony from God of his acceptance of them in his Service and Worship? And have they not then God's Authority for their meeting together in his Name, the only Lord of their Consciences, and the only Lawgiver for his own Worship and Service?

And must Magistrates in the things of the outward man, by Christians be obeyed for Conscience-sake in things not against Conscience? And must not the Lord himself by his People be obeyed for Conscience-sake in the things of the inward man? And must every Ordinance of man be submitted unto for the Lord's sake, that is not against the Lord? and must not the Lord himself be submitted unto for his own sake, by his true Worshipppers in his own worship and Service?

And, is not this to domineer and rule over, and over-rule the Faith and Consciences of God's true Worshipppers (which by both *Papists* and *Protestants* in words is disclaimed, which condemns their deeds) to impose upon them in the Worship of God, not only contrary to what in the sight of God is made manifest in their Consciences for the VVorship of God, and which is according to the VVord of Truth, and as by the Spirit of Christ in their hearts is prescribed to them, but also in other manner than by the Apostles and primitive Christians: God was worshipped, before either the Common-Prayer Book or the Mass-Book was? whose manner of VVorship was then said to be con-

trary to Law, and by them called *Herésie*, who reputed their own according to Law; as it fares at this day with the *Quakers*, who after the manner which is now called *Herésie*, by them who are themselves in the *Herésie*, they, as the Apostles did, do worship God, even their Father, in the Spirit and in the Truth.

And if the Apostles and primitive Christians did meet together *above the number of Four besides the household*, and in their Meeting did worship God in other manner than is allowed by the *Liturgy* or practice of the Church of England, before the *Liturgy* was; why should it be made an unlawful meeting now, and so capital as to be so severely punished, as with Banishment, for the *Quakers* to meet together before the Lord, *above the number of Four besides the household*, and in their meeting to worship God, in that manner in which God may be worshipped, otherwise than is allowed by the *Liturgy* or practice of the Church of England, and as by the Apostles and primitive Christians God was worshipped before the *Liturgy* was, to wit, in the Spirit and in the Truth, as they did, seeing they are of the same Faith, and in the same Spirit and Truth, and under the same obligation as to their Consciences as they were?

And by Christ are purchased into the same Liberty, for the free exercise of their Faith and Consciences towards God, in his own Worship, and one towards another in the Truth and Service of God and one another in the Lord; which Liberty, freely to exercise their Faith and Consciences in the Worship of God, they may no more part with in vassalage to man, than with their Lives: for in the Liberty and Freedom of their Faith and Consciences, in which Christ hath made them free, are they not to stand fast to God alone, whose Servants they are, and the only Lord and Master of their Faith and Consciences, and not again to be entangled with the Yokes of Bondage? lest by captivating the Faith and defiling their Consciences, they so become the servants of men, as not becoming the Servants of Christ.

And if any, notwithstanding what hath been said, do yet assert, *That the Worship prescribed in the Liturgy is the only and true Worship of God, and that God can no otherwise be truly and spiritually worshipped but as is prescribed and allowed by the Liturgy or practice of the Church of England*; do they not consequently conclude the Worship of the Apostles and primitive Christians to be false, who worshipped not by the precept of the *Liturgy*, but in Spirit before the *Liturgy* was? And did not Christ to the Woman of Samaria say, *The hour cometh, and now is,*

4. (this was before the *Liturgy*) *when the true Worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth, and that the Father seeketh such to worship*

him? May it not therefore rather be asserted, That God may be otherwise worshipped than by the prescript of the *Liturgy*, or then is allowed by the practice of the Church of *England*, to wit, in Spirit and in Truth, which by Christ is prescribed for the Worship of God, and by the Apostles and primitive Christians was practised, before the *Liturgy* was; which Worship in the Spirit and in the Truth, not only ended the Temple-worship at *Jerusalem*, but also is repugnant to all the invented worships of every Nation.

And if it be said by any, (as in effect it hath been said by some, esteemed wise and learned, to justify the use of the *Common-Prayer-Book* or *Liturgy*, as they call it) *That there is no Form of Worship precisely declared and prescribed by God for his Worship.*

I answer, If there be no Form of Worship declared and prescribed by God; should not men then tremble to prescribe where God hath not prescribed? and must that therefore be the Worship of God which is prescribed by men? And if they find not precisely declared and prescribed the Form of God's Worship in the Scripture, doth it therefore follow that the Form of God's Worship is not precisely declared and prescribed by God? or that which may be thought to be omitted by God, that it must therefore be supplied by man? Doth God precisely require his Worship? and doth he not as precisely prescribe the Form how he will be worshipped, to them of whom he requires it? Was *Moses* faithful in all his house as a Servant? and is not *Christ* as a Son over his own house? for, is not *Christ* the King and Prophet of his Church? and is this only titular, or an idle dignity, without fruit or effectual operation and virtue? for, as their King and Prophet, is not *Christ* ever present with his, by his Spirit that dwelleth in them, and that abideth with them for ever, to teach them and to lead them, and to guide and govern them? for, did not *Christ* before he was crucified, tell his Disciples that he would not leave them as Orphans, but that he would come to them again, and manifest himself unto them, and with the Father make his abode with them? And is not *Christ* also in the bosom of the Father, to make known his will concerning his own Worship and Service? And do not his Sheep hear and know his Voice, and learn of him? and doth he not shew them plainly of the Father, as it is written, *The time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in Parables, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father?*

Again, Is not the manner and form of God's Worship, precisely declared and prescribed by God in the Scriptures, to be in Spirit and in Truth? and if that be doubtful, or hidden and unknown to them which are esteemed wise and learned, which in the Scripture is written

4. ten, *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true Worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth?* And if these be enigmatical sayings, viz. *To them that have eyes, and see but perceive not; and have ears and hear, but understand not. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth;* Yet herein, is there not a plain description by *Christ* of the Worship of God, to them that are taught of God, and have the mind of *Christ*, and by the Spirit of Truth are led and guided into all Truth? And wherein any thing which *Christ* spake to his Disciples, whilst he was present with them in the body, was at all obscure and ambiguous to them, because of their weakness; did not *Christ* direct them to the Teachings of the holy Spirit as to all things and for the bringing all things to their remembrance, and opening their understandings in all whatsoever he had said unto them? And what then, in the Worship of God, is there more precise, which hath not been prescribed and declared at first by *Christ*, and which since hath not been, or may not in all the parts of God's Worship be plainly described by the holy Ghost, in the hearts and consciences of God's faithful and true Worshippers, whom the Father seeketh to worship him; although perhaps it may be hidden from them, who reject the Counsel of God within themselves, and despise the most sure Conduct of his Spirit, who leads into all Truth, and who chuse to themselves the Worship which is after the Inventions and Commandments of men?

And so far as much as God may be worshipped in other manner, than is allowed by the Liturgy or practice of the Church of *England*, as by the Apostles and primitive Christians he was before the Liturgy was; and as by *Christ* is prescribed for the Worship of God, to wit, *in Spirit and in Truth*; why should endeavours be used with such extremity against a People that fear the Lord, whose consciences are tender and sensible, and in the feeling of that which offends the Lord, not only to obstruct them in their just Liberty, purchased to them as *Christians* by *Christ*, and the free exercise of their Faith and Consciences, to worship God in that manner in which God may be worshipped, otherwise than is allowed by the Liturgy, &c. but also by their Laws to limit them to another manner of Worship, than that in which God may be worshipped; and otherwise than that into which they by the Spirit of *Christ* are led to worship God; and other than that which by the primitive Christians was practised for the Worship of God; and which they no where find in the Scriptures either limited unto or prescribed; and which the Witness of God in their Consciences is against?

Do not the stronger herein (by their strength) rule over the weak, in the things of God, which by *Christ* are distinguished from the things that are *Cæsars*? Is not this by might and by power, to over-rule the Heritage of God, against their knowledge of the will of God, and what God requires of them? and against the divine wisdom, and their spiritual understanding, which God hath given them for his Service and Worship? and against their faith, and what they really believe to be the true and spiritual Worship of God? and against the discerning and judgment, which by the gift of God is seated in their hearts and souls; by which they distinguish in themselves, and do judge rightly of things that differ, and approve of that which is most excellent; and which is acceptable and well-pleasing in the sight of God, yea and against the witness of God in them, and the feeling of their own consciences; And is not to rule by force the Lambs of *Christ*, and to give law and rule to their faith and consciences, by penalties and punishments, contrary to what is written *Zech. 4. 6. Not by Might, nor by Power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts*? Is the strength of men then, and their Force and Laws, Penalties and Punishments, the means appointed by God to teach people the knowledge and fear of God? or, *Doth the Wrath of man accomplish the Righteousness of God*? or, are these *Jam* the weapons of the Spiritual-Warfare, by which people are to be sub- 20. ject unto the Lord in his Spiritual-Worship and Service? And is that Worship well-pleasing or acceptable to God, which is forc'd only by the fear and punishment of men? or, doth God seek such Worshipers, as by carnal compulsion worship him? Nay, are not these of the weapons, with the which the many-headed Beast, with his Horns and Crowns, which rise out of the Sea, have made War with the Saints for these many hundred years, and have so overcome them as to their bodies, as that many have lost their precious Lives in Prisons and Dungeons, and at the Gibbet and the Stake?

Was the material Temple by *Zerubbabel* to be rebuilt, without the help of Secular Force? and must there be the exercise of Inhumane Cruelty for the building of the Spiritual-Temple and House of God, which in the Lord is the Pillar and Ground of Truth? Is not the Lord *Jesus Christ* now the builder of his Church? and is not He only given as a Leader, and the Commander of his People, in Spiritual things? for, is not all Power in Heaven and Earth, by his Father given unto him, for the establishment of his Heavenly and Spiritual Kingdom and Government? and as the Lord of his own House, is it not to be left to him, to order it and to govern it without the help of the force of man? for, is not the Spirit and Power of *Christ*, of more efficacy for

- the government of his Church, than might and power by men? And
3. how is God glorified in the Church by *Christ Jesus*, throughout all ages world without end, if the Church be gathered and governed by the Authority and force of men? Is not the Law of God, which by his Spirit is written in the hearts of his People, and his Fear, and the Dread which by him is put upon them, the Covenant by which they are to draw near unto him, in his holy Worship, rather than the Laws and Penalties of men? And is not the Lords Covenant with his People the only force (that is to say, without the force of men) which by him is put upon them, as to his own Spiritual Service and Worship? And as to the Lord, is not his Covenant sufficient, without the force of men? as it is written, *As for me, this is my Covenant with them,*
59. *saith the Lord; My Spirit which is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seeds seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth, and for ever.* And in the day of the Lord's Power, are not his People willing, without carnal compulsion by Secular force and violence? And did not the Prophet *Micah* (full of Power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of Judgment, and Might) declare against the Heads of the house of *Jacob*, and the Princes of the house of *Israel*, who built up *Zion* with blood, and *Jerusalem* with iniquity?

And what remains now in this day of tryal for the *Quakers*, the true Successors of the holy Prophets and Martyrs of *Jesus*, but to succeed them in their Sufferings, and fill up that which is behind of the Afflictions of *Christ*, for his Bodies sake, which is the Church? for, whilst Laws are made and executed upon them, to limit them in their Meetings; by which they are made offenders, who otherwise are blameless; and whilst their Meetings together in the fear of the Lord, and in obedience to his Law and Commandment, and in his Worship and Service, are rendred as the Transgressions of the Laws (they exceeding the limited number of *Four*, &c.) which otherwise and without that limit, are enjoined by the Spirit of the Lord, and strictly required not to be forsaken by any, either wilfully after they have received the knowledge of the Truth; or for fear of Man, who when he hath killed the body can do no more, lest greater sufferings from God may be expected, to wit, a certain fearful looking for of Judgement, and the fiery Indignation of God; who can both kill the body, and cast the soul into Hell; And what then now remains for the *Quakers*, in these exercises and tryals of their Faith and Patience, but to offer up their Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, as their reasonable service; and patiently to suffer all these cruelties, which

men may be permitted to inflict upon them ? for, of necessity must they not either suffer, or flee their Testimony, and deny *Christ* before men, and expose him to open shame before his enemies, and them that hate his appearance, and that persecute him in his members ? And will not *Christ* deny them before his heavenly Father, that deny him before men ? and will not *Christ* shame them, when in the glory of his Father he is made manifest, who are ashamed of him and of his Testimony, when in his members he is despised and persecuted ?

And though the Meetings of the *Quakers* are by men rendred unlawful, because of the Laws that are made against them ; yet, are they therefore sinful in the sight of God, or unlawful by the Law of God ? or, are their Meetings therefore displeasing to the Lord, because they are envied and persecuted by men ? Would *Daniel's* praying to his God have been the transgression of a Law, if there had not been a Law made purposely against it ? or, was his praying then, and his making supplications before the Lord, his sin against the Lord, even then when there was a Law made against it, which they called a Royal Statute, and a firm Decree which altereth not ? And although the Meetings of the *Quakers* are made transgressions before men, because of the Laws that are made against them ; yet, is it either a transgression in itself, or a sin before the Lord, for innocent Lambs and the harmless Flock of *Christ*, in obedience to the Voice of their Shepherd, to meet together and to be gathered in his Name (and he in the midst of them, to feed them and to fold them) that they might be fed in his green Pastures, and refreshed with his living Fountains of the Waters of Life : Nay, was it not a transgression in them among the *Hebrews*, and their Apostacy and sin against the Lord, who after they had received the knowledge of the Truth, did yet forsake the assembling of themselves together, with them that persevered in the Truth ; And forsook not the assembling of themselves together, but endured a great Hebrew fight of Afflictions, and were made a Gazing-stock both by Reproaches and 25, Afflictions ; and took joyfully the spoiling of their Goods. 33.

And is not the Name of *Christ* (which is above every name) even his Power and his Presence, the Authority in which God's true Worshipers are to gather together to worship him, rather than the Laws of men ? for, is not *Christ* present in the midst of them, who are gathered together in his Name ? are not God's true Worshipers therefore to meet together in the Name of *Christ*, and by his Authority to worship God, as by the Spirit of *Christ* they are drawn and compelled, ordered and guided, which leads into all Truth, notwithstanding the Laws of men ? for wherein the Laws of men for Conscience-sake can-

not be actively obeyed, are they not submitted unto, and passively obeyed, yea and fulfilled, by their patient suffering of their penalties? And are not their Meetings lawful in the sight of God, who are gathered together in the Name of *Christ*? for, are they not owned of God, by the Presence of *Christ* in the midst of them? and do not they offer violence to *Christ* in the midst of them, who violate their Meetings that are gathered together in his Name? do not they despise him who despise them? and, is not what is done to them for his sake, by him esteemed as done to him? And, were it not better for them, that a Millstone were hanged about their necks, and they cast into the Sea, than for them to offend one of the least of his little ones?

And, as to the place for Divine Worship and the Service of God, in the exercise of Religion; Are there now any certain places prefixt and limited unto by *Christ*, since the hour came that God would neither be worshipped on the Mountain of *Samaria*, nor yet at *Jerusalem*? are not all limits and ties to certain prefixt places for the Worship of God, made null and void by the Ministration of the Spirit and the Truth as it is in *Jesus*? for, are not all distinctions of places by *Christ* annihilated; in that which to the Woman of *Samaria* he saith; *Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this Mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father*? And did not the then Teacher of the Gentiles, in Faith and Verity, will them to pray every where? as well without any scruple to the place; as without doubting in what they asked according to the will of God? And doth not the Lord by the Prophet *Malachi* say, that *IN EVERY Place Incense shall be offered unto his Name, and a pure Offering*; and, that his Name shall be great among the Heathen? And in the Liturgy of the Church of *England*, is it not said, (*viz.*) *It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at All times, and in All places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord Almighty, and everlasting God, &c.* And is not *Christ* there, and in the midst of them, wheresoever it be that two or three are gathered together in his Name?

And, did not the primitive Christians of the Cities of *Corinth*, *Ephesus*, and *Thessalonica*, &c. in the Worship of God, meet apart from the Jewish Synagogues, and from the Idol Temples? And, were not the Assemblies of God's true Worshipers in *Jerusalem* approved of by God, who in the Worship of God met apart from them who worshipped in the Temple? for, were not the Churches of *Judea* and *Samaria*, and of all *Asia* and *Macedonia*, which were in God the Father, and in our Lord *Jesus Christ*, so many distinct Congregations, and all separated from their several National Worships? as in some Translations

nations the 2d Cor. 1.2. is read, *Unto the Congregation of God which is at Corinth*; and Gal. 1.2. *Unto the Congregations at Galatia, &c.* and as so many separated and distinct Congregations, all in the Unity of God the Father and of Christ in the midst of them; had not they power and authority from Christ, and by his Presence with them, either in their own hired houses, or in any other convenient places, to meet together in his Name, for the exercise of Religion and Worship, and the administration of holy things within and among themselves.

Are we not all to be the Servants of God only, and not the Servants of men, in the things of God, which concerns his heavenly Kingdom and Government? as it is written 1 Cor. 7.23. *Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men*: for, are not the matters of Religion God's matters? and, is not God only our Master in the matters of his Spiritual Worship? hath not the Lord only the sole power over both our Souls and our Bodies, in his own Worship and Service? and is not the Lord only, the alone Judge in and over our Consciences? And must not we all stand or fall to our own Master? as it is written, Rom. 14.4. *Who art thou that judgest another mans servant? to his own Master he standeth or falleth*. Is not mans judgment and authority over the consciences of the Lord's Servants, in the matters of Religion and Worship, herein by the Apostle excluded, in that which he here saith, *Who art thou that judgest another mans servant? to his own Master he standeth or falleth*. In the late Annotation, published in the year 1651, on John 7.51. it is said, *Those whom God hath set in Authority, may and ought to judge of Secular businesses; but of mans final estate Christ only is to judge*. And did not the Apostles deny Lordship over the Consciences of God's Heritage, and disclaim to have any Dominion over their Faith? for, doth not Peter in his exhortation to the Elders to feed the flock of God, say, *Neither as being Lords over God's Heritage*? And doth not Paul to the Corinthians say, *Nat for that we have Dominion over your Faith*? Is there then any such Lordship or Dominion, by the Secular Powers, in the Spiritual Body, as to give Law and Rule to the Faith and Consciences of God's faithful and true Worshipers, in the matters of Religion, and for the Worship of God?

Are the Servants of God therefore to make men their Masters in the Service of God? or, are the Commandments of men to be their Limits and Prescriptions for the Worship of God? or rather, Are not they false teachers, and themselves in the false and vain worship, who for the Worship of God teach for Doctrines the Commandments of men? for, of such worshippers and Teachers doth not Christ say, *But*

16. *in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men?*
 9. And for the Servants of God, to resign the power over their souls, and their soul-concernments, into the hands of men, and for them in subjection to the commandments of men, to yeeld up the dominion over their consciences to man, which only belongs to God; is not this in the things of God to make themselves the Servants of men? and herein is not the Lord rejected, and his Sovereignty and Dominion contemned and reproached? And in the concerns of their eternal being, do they not in this stand or fall to men, as their Masters? or, will Christ profit them any thing, who in the things which concern his own Heavenly Kingdom and Government, do yeeld their Souls and their Consciences to be yok'd and bound by men?

Are not the Lord's Servants here (in the things of the Lord) both by the Apostles Doctrine and Example, to be left to their Lord's Judgement; and to stand or fall, as by his Justice they are either justified or condemned, without their being judged by mans judgment? And as amongst men, it is accounted unequal, for one man to exercise authority over another mans Servant, and an injury to the Master; So, doth not the Lord here by the Apostle sharply reprove the presumption of those, who at all take upon them to judge the Lord's Servants in the matters of Religion; especially in those things which are owned
 18
 7, 8, by him, and which by him are allowed in them; and wherein
 10. the Lord hath received them, and doth accept of them? And, will not the Lord as severely judge them, and their usurpation and Hypocrisie, as they in the exercise of authority over the Lord's Servants, are severe in their judgments, and do judge that which is of God in them: for, is it not an high provocation in them; and, are not they usurpers, who exercise authority over the Servants of Christ, in those things in which Christ only is their Lawgiver and their Judge? And, are not they hypocrites, who under the pretence of their service to Christ, do persecute the Members and Servants of Christ; and, that pretend it good service to God, to make strong the bands of the Righteous, and with the fist of wickedness to smite the Lord's Servants? And when the Lord comes to make inquisition for Blood, and wrongs done, in an hour that they are not aware of, will he not then remember them, and appoint them their portion with Hypocrites?

For, as to the matters of Conscience in Religion & the Worship of God, and all those things which relate to the inward man; is not every man to stand before the Judgement-Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body? and is not this by the Apostle made use of, as an Argument or Reason, why Christians should

not therefore judge one another in the matters of Religion, nor set at nought their Brother, in things in which he is neither to himself nor to any man, but to the Lord only; in that which he saith, *But why dost thou judge thy Brother? or, why dost thou set at nought thy Brother? we shall all stand before the Judgment-seat of Christ: For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, Every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.* Doth not the Apostle herein, reprove among Christians their judging one another, and their setting at nought one another in the matters of Religion, and all those things in which they are to the Lord, and not to themselves or to man, both as an usurpation of Gods right, to whom only every knee must bow, and every tongue confess, as to all those things which are only proper to the Judgment of God, and not to mans judgment? and also, as a violation of the Brotherhood; which relation of equality and fellowship as Brethren, in the things of God amongst Christians, and as Members together of the same Body, should be preserved in the unity of the Spirit and by the bond of Peace, and to deter them from it, by their being accountable to God for it?

Are not the Lord's Servants in the things of God, which by Christ are distinguished from the things that are *Cesars*, therefore to be left at liberty by Magistrates, to stand or fall to their own Master; that is to say, as to their Consciences in matters of Religion, and the Worship of God? For, in the regiment of their Souls, and the dominion over their Consciences, is not the Lord only their Master, and not man? And, are they not therefore bought with a price, that in the things of God they should not be the servants of men? And wherein they are *freemen*, &c. to be at liberty from the *Laws of men*, are they not therein the Lord's Servants, and under the Law to Christ? and even in the Body, are they not accountable to Him as their Judge, whose Judgment-seat is set up in their Souls? And by the Law of Christ are they not judged, if they transgress, in things in which they are at liberty from the *Laws of men*? for, doth not his Law take hold, where their *Laws* cannot reach? and, are not their thoughts, and the intents of their hearts opened in them, and manifest to the Searcher of hearts? For, is not the Sword of his Spirit, (i.e.) his Word, which is nigh them, quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joynts and marrow; to the discerning of the thoughts and intents of the heart? And is not the Judge of all (which either justifies or condemns in every mans conscience) alwayes before the door of their hearts, in their own consciences, to condemn all that either entrench in or cometh forth, that

5. is against him? as it is written, *Grudge not one against another, Brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold, the Judge standeth before the door.*

And in that which by the Apostle is concluded, as inevitable, viz.
 14. So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God. Doth he not herein, reasonably exclude the judgments of men, in the matters of Religion and Conscience, relating to the Worship of God, as himself next saith, viz. *Let us not therefore judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall in his Brothers way:* for seeing that no man can by any means redeem his Brother, nor give to God a ransom for his soul, but that every one must account for himself to God; is it therefore reasonable, that any man should impose upon another, contrary to his faith and conscience, and in the spiritual concerns of his soul, relating to his everlasting being, in which the Imposer cannot answer to God satisfactorily for the imposed upon, nor redeem his soul, he therein miscarrying? And, do not they put stumbling-blocks in their Brothers way, and an occasion for him to fall, who impose upon their Brothers in spiritual things,
 14. contrary to his faith and conscience? for, *whatsoever is not of faith, is sin:* and, *if his own conscience condemn him, God is greater.*

And forasmuch as every one must account for himself to God, is it not therefore also reasonable, that in the things of God every man's conscience should be thorowly satisfied, and their minds by the Lord
 14. Jesus Christ fully perswaded; as it is written, *Let every man be fully perswaded in his own mind;* rather than that any should be forced contrary to their minds, and against their consciences, by the laws of men: for, is not every one that doubteth in what he doth, condemned in
 23. himself? as it is written, *He that doubteth is damned, if he eat.* Doth it not therefore concern every one that believeth, to keep the Faith by which he stands, even as he hath received; and his conscience void of offence; as it is written, *Hast thou Faith? have it to thy self before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing he alloweth.* And is not every mans conscience to be perswaded by the Lord Jesus
 14. Christ, as saith the Apostle? *I know and am perswaded by the Lord Jesus, &c.* and rather by the terrour of the Lord, than by the terrour of
 5. men; as it is written, *Knowing therefore the terrour of the Lord, we persuade men, &c.*

And in order therefore to their being fully satisfied in their consciences by the Lord Jesus, are they not in the Light of Christ to try things that differ? and in all, are they not to prove what that good and perfect Will of God is? And when in the true discerning of that which is right in the sight of God, they are fully perswaded, and their
 consciences

consciences thorowly satisfied by the Lord Jesus Christ; are they not stedfastly to hold fast the Good, whatsoever Laws by men may be made against it; as it is written, *Prove all things; hold fast that which is good*? for otherwise, if the matters of Faith, and the manner of Gods Worship, should depend upon the Laws of men; may not then our Faith and Religion; and the manner of God's Worship, as oft, be changed, as the minds of Magistrates may change?

And, is it not possible that Magistrates may err in matters of Religion and Worship, (for therein are they not of different minds in *Europe*?) and for the People to be seduced, even by their Magistrates? for of *Manasseh*, is it not said, that he seduced the People to do more evil, 2 Ki. then did the Nations whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel? 21. 9. And did not *Jeroboam* drive Israel from following the Lord, and make them *sin a great sin*? And doth not the Lord by the Prophet *Isaiah*, as grieved therewith, say, *O my People, they which lead thee, cause thee to err, Isaiah, and destroy the way of thy paths*? And did not *Judah* quote to the Prophet *Jeremiah*, as examples, the Antiquity of their Ancestors, and the Authority and Practice of her Rulers, for the abominable Idolatrous Worship; in the exercise of which she promised to her self both peace 17. and plenty?

And, were not the Idolatrous Priests ordained by the Kings of *Judah*, to burn Incense in the High-Places, in the Cities of *Judah*, and 23. 5. in the Places round about *Jerusalem*?

And in the true and Spiritual Worship of God, is there not the exercise and operation of the true and living Faith, which worketh by Love? for, was it not by Faith that *Abel* offered a more acceptable Sacrifice than *Cain*? and, without Faith it is impossible to please God: *Heb. for he that approacheth to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* And is this Faith either in the gift of Magistrates? or, doth it operate by the force of their Laws? And in order that the Lord may be truly, spiritually, and acceptably worshipped; must there not be of necessity, an understanding in some measure of the Will of God in his Worshippers; and so mixt with Faith, as that their minds may be fully perswaded, and their consciences thorowly satisfied, both as to the matter and manner of his Worship? or else, will not their Sacrifice be as of the blind, and the halt, and maimed? And is this understanding of the Will of God given to them by the exercise of Secular Force? or, are their consciences to be satisfied by the executions of the Laws of men, and their Penalties? Or rather, are they not to look into the perfect Law of Liberty, (the *Iam* Royal Law, on which hangs all the Law and the Prophets; and ac- 25.

according to which the Laws of men ought to be regulated) which in their hearts is written, and not in literal or outward Commands, nor by the Prescriptions of men; but with the Spirit of the living God, and therein to learn of Christ the will of God concerning his own Worship and Service.

And, must not the Lord be worshipped by his own spiritual and immortal Birth, and with the returns of the breathings of his own Life, in the unity of his own Spirit, and of the Truth as it is in Jesus; and rather according to the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, than either with the Inventions or by the Precepts of men? Or, can the Lord be truly and spiritually worshipped on earth, but by his own Spirit, and in the Truth, and of them that are of his Spirit? And, is the Spirit of the Lord either to be limited or directed by men? for, doth
 40. not the Prophet of the Lord say, *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his Counsellor, hath taught him?* Or, do themselves truly discern the Spiritual Worship of God, in the inward feeling of that which is Immortal of God in them, in which only God is to be worshipped; and in the sensible motion and operation of the Spirit of God, speaking in them, and making Intercession for them, according to the will of God, and not after the will of man; in which flesh is to be silent, and the man passive, who prescribes to others By-Laws or
 8. Canons for the Worship of God? for, doth not the Apostle say, *We know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it self maketh request for us with sighs which cannot be expressed?* And, doth not Christ
 att. say, *It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh*
 20. *in you?* And if the Apostles knew not beforehand what to pray for as they ought; is the Lord then truly and spiritually worshipped by the reading of stinted Forms of Prayer, imposed for the publick Worship of God, and which are not only known beforehand, but are also read week after week, and year after year?

And if by might and power any should be forc'd astray, to worship God in that manner which is contrary to the Law of God in their consciences, (though highly esteemed amongst men) would not even their Prayers be their sin? for, doth not Solomon say, *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer shall be abomination.*
 28. *And he that causeth the Righteous to go astray by an evil way, shall fall*
 0. *into his own pit.* And is not their sin great, and will not their stripes be many, who either by force or subtilty are either drawn or driven to worship God after that manner, which is contrary to their knowledge and conscience? And if by the force of Might and Power, any should be driven contrary to God's witness in their consciences, will

they not hereby be run into transgression and Rebellion against God? and will not the Witness of God in them, in their own consciences, be their condemnation? And is not Rebellion as the sin of Witchcraft, and Transgression as Wickedness & Idolatry? And, are their own consciences pure and without offence, and tender, and in the feeling of anothers conscience? or rather, are not their consciences reprobated, without remorse and unsensible, who by force would defile and offend, and even wound and wrack the consciences of others?

And do not they sin against Christ the Head, who so sin against his Body the Church, and who grieve his Spirit, and oppress his Members, by imposing rigorously upon them heavy burdens, which they are not able to bear, even to the wounding of their consciences if they submit; and, as much as in them lyeth, to destroy their souls for whom Christ died? And if the doubtful thoughts of them that are weak in the Faith, in things that are lawful in themselves, are not to be judged; as it is written, *Rom. 14. 1. Him that is weak in the Faith, receive you, but not to judge his doubtful thoughts,* (see the margin.) Is the faith and certain knowledge of God's true Worshippers then to be judged as to the manner of God's Worship, which they assuredly believe to be the will of God, and certainly know to be of the Lord, and required of them, as his Law unto them? Was the noise either of Hammer or Ax, or of any Tool of Iron, heard in the House of God whilst it was in building by *Solomon*? And are the Laws of men then, and their Penalties and Punishments, to be the Foundations now, on which God's Spiritual House is to be built? or, is the matter for the House of God now, to be hewen out, and hammered, and prepared by armed-men and the noise of the clattering of Arms, with which the peaceable Meetings of the *Quakers* have been often assaulted and broken up, and their Bodies hurt and bruised? Is Force and Violence exercised by men on the Body, the way of God to save the soul? Did not the Prophet in the power of God, and in the might of his Spirit, declare against them, who built up *Zion* with blood and *Jerusalem* with wrong?

And is it not uncharitable among Christians, and against the Law both of Love and Equity, and that which they would not be done unto themselves; for one to impose upon another, as to their Faith and Conscience, in the matters of Religion and Worship, contrary to the Law which rules in their Consciences, and to that which they believe to be the Will of God; and to that in which they are not to themselves, but to the Lord; and to that in which the Lord hath received them, and doth accept of them? For, doth not the Royal Law com-

2. mand, to love thy neighbour as thy self? and hath not Christ to his Disciples commanded, saying, *Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.*

2. Are not even Gainsayers by sound Doctrine, both to be convinced and exhorted? and in meekness are not they to be instructed, who oppose themselves? and are not even unbelievers, and them that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, to be gathered by the Word of God preached, and to be won by moderation and soberness, and by the good conversation of them that believe? And is not the Word of God of more force, inwardly to execute the righteous Judgments of God for disobedience, and to convince, perswade, and compel to obedience, than all the force and strength of men? for, is it not therefore by the Lord likened to a Fire, and to a Hammer which breaks the Rocks in pieces? reade *Ier. 23. 29. & 20. 9. & 6. 11. & 5. 14. Isa. 49. 2. & 30. 30. & 11. 4.*

And, was not the Baptism of Repentance, which by *John* was preached, as an *Ax* from God in his hand, for the cutting down of fruitless Trees? and were not they prickt in their hearts with the force of the Word, and the authority of the Doctrine, which by the Apostles was preached? And did not *Felix* tremble before *Paul*, when he reasoned of Righteousness, and Temperance, and of Judgment to come? And is not therefore the matter for the building of the Church of God, to be prepared by the Ministry of his Word in God's Authority, rather than by the force and terror of men? And are not even those that oppose themselves, to be subdued by the Gospel of *Christ* unto the obedience of God, in his Spiritual Service and Worship? For, is not the Gospel of Christ the Power of God? And, is not the Authority of the Word, and the Force of the Gospel, in which the Power of God is made manifest, the means by God appointed to satisfie doubts; and to decide Controversies in matters of Religion and manner of Worship? For, is not the Word of God both quick and powerful, and the Sword of the Spirit, and sharper for the convincement of Gainsayers, than the two-edged Swords of men? for, doth it not pierce, to the discerning of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and inwardly force and compel, where the Force of men can neither reach nor enter?

And if Power in Magistrates over the Faith and Consciences of God's faithful and true Worshippers, in the matters of Religion and Worship, be pretended unto as they are Magistrates; may not then Antichristian or Heathen Magistrates, pretend to the same power, to over-rule the Faith of their Subjects, and compel them to their Religion; and by their penalties and punishments, to force their Con-

sciences to worship Idols? And, if such power in Magistrates be pretended unto as they are Christians; are we not to distinguish between the Office or Authority of Magistrates, in the administration of their Civil Power, as Rulers and Governours; and the Religion of Magistrates as they are Christians; by which they have fellowship in the Church, as Members of the Spiritual Body; of which Christ only is the Head; among them that in *Christ Iesus* are called & sanctified through the Truth, in which many are one Body, and all Members one of another; and all partakers of one Bread, and all made to drink into one Spirit? And as Christians therefore, are not all Brethren, as in that state, and the Chiefest to be the Servant of all, and that not particularly only, and be served of all, but in the Truth and for the Gospel-sake to serve all?

And whereas those Scriptures, viz. *Let every soul be subject to the higher Powers, &c.* and, *Put them in mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers, to obey Magistrates, &c.* and, *Submit your selves to every Tit. Ordinance of man for the Lords sake, &c.* are many times, by many brought against the *Quakers*, thereby to signifie to them, as if subjection and obedience to Magistrates, as to their Faith and Consciences, in the matters of Religion and the Worship of God, is required of them by the authority of these Scriptures.

I answer, That in these Scriptures precited, here is indeed required subjection and obedience, even by Christians to Magistrates, in all those matters and things which concern their outward man; but, that subjection and obedience to Magistrates by Christians, as to the exercise of their Faith and Consciences, in the matters of Religion and the Worship of God, which are the concerns of the inward man, cannot reasonably be understood here, to be required by the Apostles in these Scriptures. I offer this as reason, viz. Because the then Magistrates, to whom obedience was required by the Apostles, as to Religion were Heathens, and worshippers of false gods; And is it reasonable for any to believe, that the Apostles herein, required that the primitive Christians should subject the exercise of their Faith and Consciences, under the dominion of them, that as to their Religion were Infidels; or, that the Church of Christ, as to matters of Religion and the Worship of God, should be governed by Heathen Rulers, that were themselves Idolators and worshippers of false gods?

And if it should be yet asserted by any, That the Apostles here in these Scriptures, intended the subjection and obedience of the inward man; and that the primitive Christians were to be subject as to their Faith and Consciences, in the matters of Religion and the Worship of

God, to the then Heathen Magistrates; will it not then follow, that if the then Heathen Magistrates had made Laws to force the primitive Christians from their Christian Religion, and their Worship which is in Spirit and in Truth, according to the Doctrine of Christ, *John 4.* And to require them to worship the false gods of the Heathen (*i. e.*) the Idols which the then Heathen Magistrates worshipped; Must not the primitive Christians then of necessity have been subject? And is not this absurd to assert? And must it not therefore of necessity follow, that the subjection and obedience here required by the Apostles in these Scriptures, is only as to all those matters and things which relate to the outward man; and not at all of the subjection of the inward man in the things of God, which relate to his own Spiritual Worship and Service?

And as to this distinction, did not Christ himself distinguish between things; and ascribe to God his things (*i. e.*) the things that are proper to God only, and not to man; and also, allow unto *Cesar* his things (*i. e.*) to the chief Magistrates of every Nation, the things that
with. belong to them, in that which he saith, *Render therefore to Cesar the*
21. *things that are Cesars, and unto God the things that are Gods?* And is not the inward man the Image of God? and are not the things of the inward man, which relate to the Worship of God, of his inscription, or under his only Dominion; as *Cesar* had his image and superscription stamp on their Coin, to signify his Dominion over them, as to the things of their outward man? And in that which *Peter* saith, *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of man, &c.* is it not manifest, that he herein intended their submission in the things of the outward man, by his own example in the case; for when the Magistrates interposed their Commands in the things of God, did he not answer them, saying,
Its 4. *Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than un-*
to God, judge ye? And again, did not he, with the other Apostles, in an-
Its 5. *swer to the Magistrates, say, We ought to obey God rather than men?* And
 was it not as to the matters of Religion, and for the exercise of their Faith and Consciences in the Service and Worship of God, that the Apostles and primitive Christians suffered Persecution by the Magistrates?

And whereas, when things by Magistrates are commanded, which for Conscience-sake cannot be obeyed by them who endeavour to keep their Consciences void of offence, that which is written, *Rom. 13. 5.* [*Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for Conscience-sake*] is often objected, thereby to insinuate, That Magistrates have dominion over the Conscience in the things of the inward man.

Answer, That every man is bound in his Conscience by the Lord and to the Lord, to obey the just Commands of their Magistrates, not only for wraths sake by man, but also for conscience sake to God, according to this Scripture, is not at all by the *Quakers* denied; But because Magistrates are to be obeyed for conscience sake to God; and as the conscience is bound by God to their obedience, and not by man, doth it therefore follow that Magistrates have dominion over the conscience? And are not Magistrates as well to be submitted unto for the Lord's sake, as for conscience sake? or, have Magistrates dominion over that in others, which in themselves hath dominion over them? For, is not that in man called *Conscience*, which in the light of Christ both knows and feels; and which as it were is the Throne of God in man, and the Seat of his divine Law, and of the Justice of God? for hath not every man either peace or trouble, as with the Light of Christ (which is the Law of God) in his own conscience, he is either justified or condemned?

Or, can Magistrates be obeyed for conscience sake in things against conscience? or, can they be submitted unto for the Lord's sake in things against the Lord? or, must Magistrates be obeyed for conscience sake in the things of the outward man; and must not the Lord be obeyed for conscience sake in things of the inward man, which concerns his own Worship and Service? or, do they either obey God or Magistrates for conscience sake, who in the Worship of God are by men forc'd against their consciences? And because Magistrates are by Christians to be obeyed for conscience sake, may it not therefore be of caution to Magistrates in their Government, to take heed, that they require nothing against the Law of God in the conscience, that so by Christians they may be obeyed for conscience sake? And if the Laws of men do answer to the Law of God in the conscience, will not every one then that resists the Power, as well be made sensible of the wrath of God in his conscience, as deserving of the wrath of men upon his outward man?

And by the opposite Commands of God and man; are not the consciences of them that are required to obey, deeply concerned, and themselves greatly tryed? for of necessity are not they forc'd into sufferings, either by the wrath of God, or by the wrath of man; that is to say, if man forbids that which God commands, or if God forbids that which man commands, must they not suffer either by God or man? for in this case of necessity must not either God or man be disobeyed? And if they obey the Laws of men, contrary to the Law of God; do they not then incur the wrath of God? and if they obey
the

the Law of God, contrary to the Laws of men; do they not then incur the wrath of men? And although the Wrath of God be the greater; yet, is not the wrath of men very great, and grievous to be born, when it is executed?

But in this case, must not the Lord be obeyed rather than man? For, as to Sovereignty, is not the Lord higher than the highest? and, doth not the Lord regard the Oppressions of the Innocent; who in their sufferings have none to flee unto but to himself only? as it is written, *If thou seest the Oppression of the Poor, and violent perverting of Judgment and Justice in a Province, marvel not at the matter: for He that is higher than the Highest regardeth; and there be higher than they.* And, doth not the wrath of man turn to the praise of God? *And the remainder of wrath will not be restrain?* And, as to their eternal estate, Are not the concerns of the soul, greater than the concerns of the body? and, even in this life, is not peace with God in the conscience, more to be regarded, than to be parted with to avoid sufferings by men? For, what is any man profited, by ease, liberty and pleasures in the body, if to gain this, he lose his soul? and what would not a wise man part with, or suffer, to gain his soul?

And, are not Magistrates as they are Christians, prohibited by Christ from the exercise of authority and dominion over the Faith and Consciences of God's true Worshipers, in the matters of Religion and the Worship of God; as it is written, *Mat. 20. 25, 26, 27. The Princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great, exercise authority upon them: but it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be Great among you, let him be your Minister: and whosoever will be Chief among you, let him be your Servant.* Which cannot be understood, that Christians should not be subject to the just Government of their Christian Magistrates in Secular things; because in Secular things, even Christians are bound in conscience by God, to be subject to the just Government even of Heathen Magistrates; May not this prohibition, viz. *But it shall not be so among you*, therefore be rather understood, the prohibiting by Christ of Secular Authority and worldly Dominion, to be exercised among Christians, for the government of his Church in the Heavenly and Spiritual things of God? And also, because in the Government of the Church, *The Greatest is to be their Minister, and the Chiefest to be the Servant of all:* and is it so in the Government of the Church by Secular Powers?

For, is not the Church of Christ, a Spiritual Body? and must not its Government therefore be Spiritual, even by the Divine Authority and Heavenly Dominion of Christ himself, as the alone Head and

Governour

Governor of the Church, which is his Mystical Body, and the fulness of him that filleth all in all ; And may not this therefore be of caution, as well to Christian Magistrates, as to Heathen Magistrates, to take heed of exercising that Authority and Dominion among Christians, over the Spiritual Body of Christ, in the matters of Faith and Worship, and the things of God relating to the inward man ; (which by Christ are distinguished, from the things of *Cesar*) which they exercise, and which may be given them of God, to be exercised by them, for their Civil Policy, and the Government of the Politick Body, in things Secular and relating to the outward man ? For, is not the Power by which the Church is to be governed, by the Father given to *Christ*, as the only Head of the Church ? and hath not *Christ* in himself kept the right of Sovereignty in the Government of his Church ? and is not *Christ* himself ever present in Spirit with his Church, for the administration of his Authority and Supremacy over the Church, and in the exercise of his Sovereignty for the Government of the Church ? And, doth not *Christ* instruct them, and rule among them, by his Word and holy Unction, and his Commands unto them, and by the operation of his Power in them ? and doth he not teach and govern them by the motions, and ministries, and conduct of his Spirit, which abideth with them, and dwelleth in them ; and by the virtues and efficacy of the gifts of his Grace, which by him are distributed to them ? And herein doth not *Christ* reign, and rule, and teach and govern his Church himself ? and hereby is not God glorified in the Church by *Christ* throughout all ages ? as it is written, *Unto him be glory in the Church, by Christ* *Ephes*
Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. 21.

And though Authority, and Superiority, and Magistracy, and Power justly derived, and lawful Dominion, in the exercise of Civil Power, for the Government of the Politick Body, be the Ordinance of God ; yet doth it therefore follow, that the same is ordained of God for the Government of his Church ? For, are the motions of the Spirit of *Christ* in his Church, and the operations of the Power of *Christ* in the Members of his *Mystical Body*, by Magistrates to be bounded and limited, through the exercise of their Dominion over them, and of their Authority upon them ; Are the gifts which by God are given, for the mutual edifying of the Church, to be ordered and disposed of by Magistrates ? have they power over, and the government of the manifestations of the Spirit of God, and all those different Administrations, which are by the same Lord, and which by the working of one and the same Spirit, operateth severally in all, for the benefit of the Body, and the profit of every member ? Or, had the then Heathen Magistrates the

same Authority over the Power and Spirit which operated in the Apostles and primitive *Christians*, as they were the Ministers and Servants of God, in the exercise of their Ministry and Service of the Church, which they had over their persons, for obedience to their just Commands in outward things relating to their outward man? or, have Christian Magistrates now the same dominion over the Spiritual Administrations of holy things in the Church, by the members of the Church, or by those who by the holy Ghost are made Overseers, to feed the Church of God, which they have over their persons, for obedience to their just commands, in outward things, relating to the outward man?

For, are Secular Laws and Penalties, the means appointed by God, to make Disciples for Christ; or, being made, to regulate them in the Spiritual Service and Worship of God? can the outward force of external compulsion by pains and punishments, ever truly convert to God, or make clean the heart, or regenerate the soul, or renew a right spirit in man? And must not that regulate, in the spiritual Service and Worship of God, which begets, and converts to God? Nor is that which Christ saith, *Luke 14. 23. Compel them to come in*, to be understood of Secular force or outward compulsion, but of the force of the Gospel of Christ; which is the Power of God to Salvation, and the compelling virtue of the Spirit of Christ; which in the Ministry of the Gospel, by answering the witness in the conscience, reacheth to the spirit in prison, and by a taste, not only invites, but by its power and virtue, compels and draws to the Lord's Supper, them that were scattered by their extravagant lusts; nor did the Apostles in their Spiritual Warfare, war after the flesh, or by the help of humane force, or outward compulsion; *For the weapons of their Warfare were not Carnal*, or by Secular Laws and Penalties; *but mighty through God, to the pulling down the strong holds*, of them that strengthened themselves against the knowledge of God; *and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*; neither did they revenge the disobedience of any, in matters of Worship, by the hand of the Magistrate, inflicting pains and punishments on the body; *for they wrestled not against flesh and blood, but against powers of darkness*, and the spirits of wickedness, which strongly hold the creature, under the dominion of Sin, and the reign of the Devil.

And to them that restrain this prohibition of Christ, viz. *But it shall not be so among you*, as if Christ herein only prohibited the exercise of Heathenish Tyranny and Oppression among Christians; I say, what Tyranny and Oppression is greater, than by might and power to over-

rule the Faith of the Just, and to oppress their Consciences? And if Heathen Magistrates, because of their power and greatness, may not after their own wills and pleasures domineer and over-rule among Heathens, in the things of the outward man; may Christian Magistrates then, by their power and might over-rule and domineer over Christians in the things of the inward man, and which relate to the Spiritual Service and Worship of God?

And if a quiet and peaceable life, in the exercise of all Godliness towards the Lord, and in his Worship and Service; and of all Honesty amongst men, in their common occasions, was the right of the primitive *Christians*, from their then *Heathen Magistrates*, though in the most material and weighty matters of Religion and Worship they differed from them; why may it not be much rather the right of *Christians* now, from their professed *Christian Magistrates*, without being molested by them, to live quietly and peaceably, in the exercise of all Godliness and Honesty, though they differ as to the manner of Worship; they giving unto Magistrates the things that are theirs, and unto God the things that are God's; which Right, that it might be enjoyed by the Lord's People, they by the Apostle are exhorted, *That* IT
Supplications, and Prayers, and Intercessions, and giving of Thanks be 1, 2
made for all men; for Kings, and all that are in Authority: that both
they may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all Godliness and Honesty; that
their Magistrates also may have the knowledge of the Truth, and their
souls saved.

And when, through the Prophecys of the Prophets, *Haggai* and *Zecharia*, by the commandment of God, the Jews again began to build the House of God; and though *Darius* the King, as to the Religion and Worship of the Jews, was a Heathen, yet he did not hinder them, nor at all molest them; but rather furthered them by his assistance and protection; and also furnished them with Sacrifices, to the end, that Ex
they might pray for the Life of the King, and for his Sons; and that 1,
Wrath from God might not break forth against the Realm, the King Ex
and his Sons? And did not *Artaxerxes*, in his Decree, submit the 6,
concernments of the House of God, to the Commands of God, in that 9,
which he saith, *Ezra 7. 23. Whatsoever is commanded by the God of*
Heaven, let it be diligently done, for the House of the God of Heaven: for
why should there be wrath against the Realm of the King, and his Sons?
which latter clause by some is read, *the Realm, the King, and his*
Sons.

And whereas the examples of *Cyrus*, *Darius*, and *Artaxerxes*, Kings of *Persia*, and reputed Heathens, are by some brought, (as having au-

thority over the Jews, as to the building of their Temple, and as regulating and reforming them as to their Sacrifices and Worship) as Arguments to prove, That *Christians* now are to be subject to their *Christian Magistrates* in the matters of Religion; that is to say, as to their Faith and Consciences in the Worship of God.

To which I answer, first as to *Cyrus*; What Commands did he impose upon the Jews, as to the matters of their Religion; or what force did he put upon them, as to the building of the Temple? was not the sum of his Proclamation, for Liberty to the captive Jews to return to their own Land, and there to build the Temple? And was not this in their advantage, and as they would have it, as to their Liberty, and to worship God, as God himself had commanded them; and might not who would, go, and who would, stay? And were not their spirits raised up by the Lord, without the force of man, who to build the House of the Lord, went up with the chief of the Fathers of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, and the Priests, and the Levites, *Ezr. i. 5*. And was not the spirit of *Cyrus*, also, (as to this thing) stirred up by the Lord, that the Word of the Lord, by the mouth of *Jeremiah*, might be fulfilled? And though *Cyrus*, as to other things, perhaps may be reputed as a Heathen; yet may this therefore be reputed as heathenish, which was of the Lord, and who long before he was born, was by the Lord, called his shepherd? *Isa. 44. 28*. And although *Darius* the king, as to Religion and Worship, differed much from the Jews, yet herein, was he not an example of moderation and of indulgence, as to their liberty, therein, (who were then under his Dominion, as to their outward man) rather than of exercising Authority over them, as to their Religion and manner of Worship; in that he was not provoked to anger against them, nor at all displeased with them, for their enterprizing the building of the Temple, without either his Command for it, or knowledge of it; and for that they desisted not from building, though they thereunto were required, (till the matter was made known to the King) by the chief Governours for the King on that side the River? And what reason is here then, for any to quote the example of *Darius*, as if he exercised authority over the Jews as to their building the Temple; and as if they could not righteously enterprize it without Command from the King being first had for it, seeing that when they began to build, they were so far from having the Kings Command for it; as that the King knew not of it, till by his Governours he was informed of it, and that the work went fast on, and prospered in their hands; and also, seeing that the Governours for the King could not cause them to cease, but till the matter came to the King, that from the King they might know his pleasure therein? And

And after the Interruption, by the force and power of the former *Artaxerxes*, *Ezra* 4. 23. and in the Reign of this *Darius*, is it not manifest by the Scriptures, that the *Jews* again began to build the Temple, by the Command of God only, through the Prophecy of the Prophets *Haggai* and *Zecharia*, *Ezra* 5. 12. *Hag.* 1. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 12. And was not the spirit of *Zerubbabel* (the Governour of *Judah*) and the spirit of *Joshua* the High Priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the People, by the Lord stirred up, to work in the House of the Lord of Hosts, their God, *Hag.* 1. 14. And in that, they could not be caused to cease but till the matter came to the King, did they herein disobey the Governours for the King, in contempt to his Government? or rather, was it not because the eye of their God was upon them? *Ezr.* 5. 5. for, did not they begin their work in obedience to the voice of the Lord their God, and continue it in the fear of the Lord, *Hag.* 1. 12. and was not the Lord's presence with them in their work, as in that which is written, *Hag.* 1. 13. *I am with you, saith the Lord?*

And when the matter, to wit, of their building the Temple, was made known to the King, by Letter to him sent to that end, from his Governours that were on that side the River, did the King at all render the *Jews* as disaffected to his Government, or disobedient to Magistrates, or inconsistent with his Laws? or did anger at all kindle within him against them, for their enterprizing the building without his knowledge of it, or commission for it? or, in his Decree, did he at all intermeddle with them in their building, (either by his Commands to his Governours, or by his own Commands to them) except those Commands of his to his Governours, to assist the *Jews* out of his Goods as to their great expence in building, that they might not be hindred in their work; and for Sacrifices to be given them day by day, that by sweet savours offered to the God of Heaven, they might pray for the life of the King, and for the lives of his Sons, *Ezra* 6. 8, 9, 10. for in the King's answer to the Governours that sent to him, did not the King command the Governours, not at all to meddle with the *Jews* in the building of the Temple, but to let them alone, that in peace they might build the Temple themselves, in that which to them he saith, *Ezra* 6. 6, 7. *Be ye far from them: let the work of this House of God alone, let the Governour of the Jews, and the Elders of the Jews build this House of God in his place.* And did not the King by his Decree also protect them, and strengthen their hands, and inforce it by a great penalty? and what in him lay, did he not promote the continuance of their Protection by his Successors, rather than to exercise authority over them, as to the Temple and Worship of God? as you may read in *Ezra* 6. 11, 12.

And was not this also of the Lord, (who turneth the hearts of Kings as he pleaseth) and not of the Heathenish nature, as it is written *Ezra 6. 22. For the Lord had made them joyfull, and turned the heart of the King of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the House of God, the God of Israel.*

And the Temple being finished, in the sixth year of the Reign of *Darius* the King, *Ezra 6. 15.* the Worship of God in his Reign was so established, according to the Commandment of God, *Ezra 6. 16—22.* as that here seems to be no need of a Reformation, as to the Worship of God, by *Artaxerxes* his Successor, who by some is quoted, for the Reformation of the Church; And if in any thing, the Church was not perfectly reformed as to the Worship of God, might not the Worship of God as well be reformed by the Commandments of God, in the Reign of *Artaxerxes*, as they by the Commandment of God began to build the Temple, in the Reign of *Darius*, without either his Commission for it, or knowledge of it? May not the Reformation therefore, by *Artaxerxes*, (the latter) mentioned in *Ezra 7.* rather relate to the Civil Government of the Province of *Judah*, which as yet was not reformed according to the Law of God, than to the Worship of God, in his Temple? for when the *Jews* were not in Captivity, but as free-men at liberty in their own Land, were they not by the Ordinance of God, both to be governed by Magistrates that knew the Law of God, and also according to the Law, which by God was given to *Moses* for their Government? And to that end, had not *Ezra* prepared his heart, both to seek the Law of the Lord, and to teach in *Israel* Statutes and Judgments? *Ezra 7. 10.*

And was not the hand of the Lord upon *Ezra*, as well for the setting of the Civil Government in *Judah* according to the Law of God, as for another return of the *Jews* to their own Land, when *Ezra* made request to *Artaxerxes* the King, who granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him, *Ezra 7. 6.* for together with the King's Commission, to *Ezra* given, for all the People of *Israel*, and the Priests and Levites that were within his Realm, to go with *Ezra*, that were minded of their own free-will to go up to *Jerusalem*, was not *Ezra*, as the King's Commissioner, sent by Authority of the King, and of his seven Counsellors, to enquire concerning *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, according to the Law of God; And over all the Land of *Judah*, and in *Jerusalem*, to settle Magistrates, and Judges, that knew the Laws of God, and to teach them that knew them not; And by the Kings Commission, was not power to him given for their execution of the Law of God, and the King's Decree, upon Malefactors?

to, either unto Death or to Banishment, or to Confiscation of goods or to Imprisonment, that so the people all might be judged, and governed, even as to their outward man, according to the Law of God, and by Magistrates, and Judges, that knew the Law of God ?

And as to that, which perhaps, by some may be alledged to prove Reformation as to the Worship of God, by *Artaxerxes* the King, viz. that both *Artaxerxes* the King and his Counsellors offered freely, and bountifully, of their Silver, and Gold, and that the King gave power, to *Ezra* for Collections in the Province of *Babylon*, and for the freewill Offerings of the People, and the Priests, and therewith, to buy Bulls, and Rams, and Lambs, &c. for Sacrifices ; and with his Brethren, to dispose of the rest, after the will of God, and as to what might farther be needful, for the House of God, that he ordered *Ezra*, to bestow out of his Treasure-house, and that he made a Decree for his Treasurers, to give unto *Ezra*, Silver, and Wheat, and Wine, and Oyl, and Salt, to a great value, if by *Ezra* it should be required of them ?

To which I say, are they not to distinguish, between the exercise of Authority, for the correcting, altering, or prescribing, as to the Worship of God, and the exercise of Authority, for the encouragement, and protection of God's true Worshipers, in the Worship of God, as by God himself it is prescribed and reformed ? And did not *Artaxerxes* the King, herein, like a Nursing-father, even to the Church (though otherwise reputed a Heathen) exercise his Imperial and Kingly Authority, for the encouragement and protection of the Jews, in the Worship of God, as by God himself it was prescribed and reformed, rather than that he intruded his own Authority or Commands, for reforming the Church, as to the Worship of God in his holy Temple ? for, as to all things which related to the Worship of God in his Temple, did not *Artaxerxes* the King submit the sole Government and Reformation of the Church, to God himself ; yea, and that with fear and reverence to God, as a consuming fire ; lest by the Wrath of God, himself with his Realm and his Sons, should be consumed ; in that which he saith, *Ezra* 7. 23. *Whatsoever is commanded by the God of Heaven, let it be diligently done for the House of the God of Heaven : for why should there be wrath against the Realm, the King, and his Sons ?* Psal. 10, 12.

And hereby, is not their error made manifest, or their malice, or ignorance of the Scriptures, who in their Pulpits, before the Judges, do make use of that which in *Ezra* 7. 26. is written ; *Whosoever will not do the Law of thy God, and the Law of the King, let judgment be speedily executed upon him ; whether it be unto Death, or to Banishment, or to confiscation of Goods, or to Imprisonment ;* with endeavour to incense the

Judges, to exercise cruelty, upon the innocent, by their misinterpretation, and wrong application, when the *Quakers* are to be tryed upon the Act for Banishment, or Imprisonment, for their meeting together in the fear of the Lord, and in his Name, to worship him; And herein do they not wrest the Scriptures, to oppress the Innocent, that are more righteous than themselves?

And if by the judgments and executions, of the Law of God and the Law of the King, and the penalties and punishments in this Scripture mentioned, here was intended by the King, a compulsion, as to the matters of Religion, and a force, as to the Worship of God, in order to a uniformity, in Religion and Worship, among all those people, over whom the Magistrates and Judges, by the Kings decree, were to be setled, as in the Wisdom of God, *Ezra* should be guided to direct; must not all the people then have been forc'd as to their Religion and their Worship, by those penalties and punishments, that were beyond the River; in which were several Provinces? or at least, should not all the people then, by these judgments and executions have been compelled to be one with the *Jews*, as to their Religion; and with them to have worshipped in the Temple, that were in the Province of *Judah* or in the Cities of *Samaria*, &c. in which there were of several Nations, and they of several Religions, and several manners of Worship; for is not that which in this Scripture is said, *Whosoever will not do the Law of thy God, and the Law of the King, &c.* intended of all the people that were beyond the River, as in the verse before, and as much as to say, Whosoever of all the people that are beyond the River, &c.

And was Judgement ever so executed upon this people, to force them as to their Religion, and the several manners of the Worship of each Nation, in which every Nation worshipped their own gods? or, were the several Nations, mentioned *Ezra* 4. 9, 10. ever compelled by those penalties and punishments, to be of the *Jews* Religion, or with them to worship in the Temple at *Jerusalem*? Nay, would not this rather have gratified, the Nations, who in those Countries were the *Jews* adversaries, then the Nation of the *Jews*, who publicly could have worshipped with the *Jews* in the Temple, and also privatly have served their own gods? for when the *Jews* laid the foundation of the Temple, would not they have builded with them? and did not they seem to enforce, the accomplishment of their desire therein, by arguments of unity with them, in that which to *Zerubbabel*, and to the chief
 1.4.2 of the Fathers, they said, viz. *Let us build with you; for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him; &c.* And did not the *Jews* both deny them, and account the Temple profaned, by the presence of profane men in it, and also both their worship, and themselves defiled

by their fellowship with Idolaters in it? And must not then those penalties and punishments, have been executed, chiefly on the *Jews*, if the speedy execution of Judgment, spoken of in this Scripture, extended to the settling of a uniformity in Religion and Worship, among all those People and Nations, over whom those Magistrates and Judges were to be settled; And then would not the *Jews* have been the greatest sufferers, in whose favour the Decree by the King was intended and granted? for if they chose rather not to build the Temple, than to admit of them to build with them; could they at all communicate with them in the Worship of God, who no otherwise feared the Lord, but as every Nation also served their own gods.

Again; Are not the penalties and punishments, that are mentioned in this Scripture, viz. *unto Death, or to Banishment, &c.* both the Judgments and Executions of the Law of God, and also Secular penalties and punishments? and doth the Law of God compel any of his true worshippers, to worship him by the force of Secular penalties & punishments? or, is that worship acceptable to God which is by compulsion and force? And to that which perhaps by some may be said, That the penalties and punishments herein mentioned, are the judgments and executions of the Law of the King. I say, are God's true Worshipers, by the Laws and Prescriptions of men, to worship God after that manner which is contrary to that which by the Law of God is prescribed for his Worship? or, are they by penalties and punishments to be forced as to the Worship of God, contrary to their Faith, and to what they believe to be the true Worship of God, and against their Consciences? And, was not the Law of God then, the Law of the King also, when the King by his Decree had established it, as his Law, to be administered in their Judicature?

Is not therefore that part of the King's Decree, which in *Ezra* 7. 25, 26. is contained, intended by the King, of the exercise of his Civil Power, for his reforming of the Magistracy and outward Judicature in the Province of *Judah*, for the Civil Government of the *Jews*, according to the Law of God; as to their outward man; as in the Wisdom of God *Ezra* should be guided to direct it; and not for his reforming of the Church as to the Worship of God: for as to what in his Decree, related to the House of God and his Worship, and to the Ministers thereof, did not his Decree end (as to the before-mentioned) with the end of the 24th verse of that chapter? or, did the King at all reform the Church, as to the Worship of God, otherwise than as by his Decree he submitted the reformation of it to the Commandments of God himself, and by his ordering that to be diligently done for the

House of the God of Heaven, which either was or should be commanded by the God of Heaven, as in ver. 23. and also as by his Decree he protected the Jews in the free exercise of their Liberty, as to their Consciences, in their obedience to the Commands of God, as to his own Worship and Service.

And as to that which perhaps by some may be objected, That these penalties and punishments may be executed, as to the matters of Religion and Worship, because the Law of God is as well there mentioned as the Law of the King, viz. *Whofoever will not do the Law of thy God, and the Law of the King, &c.* To which I answer. Was not the Law of God, by the Law of the King established, to be administered in the outward Government of the Jews, as to the things of their outward man, and to be executed upon Offenders in their Civil Judicature, according to the nature and degree of each transgression, as by the judgement of the Judicature they were sentenced, whether unto Death, or to Banishment, or to Confiscation of Goods, or Imprisonment; for, were not the Jews in their liberty from Captivity, to be judged and governed according to the Law of God; even as to the things of the outward man, and by Magistrates and Judges that knew the Law of God? And were not the Kings of *Israel* therefore to have a Book of the Law of God, and therein to read all the dayes of their lives; that they might learn the fear of the Lord their God, and keep the words of his Law, and his Statutes, to do them; and that their hearts might not be lifted up above their Brethren, nor they turn aside from the Command of God neither to the right-hand nor to the left.

And, in order to the administration and execution of the Law of God in their Civil Judicature, was not *Ezra* therefore, after the wisdom of God, as his guide, by the King's Decree to settle Magistrates and Judges that knew the Law of God, and to teach them that knew it not; for, had not *Ezra* prepared his heart to seek the Law of the Lord, to do it, and to teach in *Israel* Statutes and Judgments? And, did not the King direct his Commission to *Ezra*, as to a Scribe of the Law of God, and a Teacher of the words of the Commandments of God; and of his Statutes to *Israel*? And do not Statutes there relate to State-Government and Civil Judicature? And was not *Ezra*, by the King and his seven Counsellors, sent to enquire concerning *Judah* and *Ierusalem*, according to the Law of his God? were not therefore these penalties and punishments (in the administration of the Law of God, by Magistrates and Judges which knew the Law of God) to be executed upon malefactors for their capital or criminal offences against the Law of God, rather than upon Innocent and regular people, for

ut. 17.
19, 20

ya 7.
11, 12.

the exercise of their Faith and Consciences to God in his Worship and Service ?

And may not these penalties and punishments be annexed by the King, to inforce his Decree, and accordingly to be executed upon any of the Jews adversaries, that at any time should oppose this his new Constitution of the Magistracy for the Government of the Jews, according to the Law of God ? for had not the Jews many potent Adversaries nigh them, who waited opportunities to mischieve them ? as in the case of the building of the Temple, were not many exasperated against the Jews, lest by it their Idolatrous High-Places should be clouded ? So in time, might not their potent Adversaries be exasperated at this new Reformation of the Magistracy, for their Civil Government, according to the Law of God, in which they had not the same opportunity, as Lords of their own Rule, to tyrannize over the Jews as formerly ?

And withall, may not these executions, viz. *unto Death, or to Banishment, or to Confiscation of Goods, or to Imprisonment* ; the rather be thus particularly signified and expressed, thereby to demonstrate the greatness of their Authority by the King's Commission, for the administration of the Law of God in their Civil Government, and the ample Power which by the King's Decree was given them, for the execution of Judgement in their Judicature, as to the things of the outward man ? Which Power here thus largely extended, was afterwards denied them by the *Romans* ; when under their Dominion, it was not lawful for the Jews to put any man to death, *Iohn 18. 31.*

And as to that which in this kind is objected by some of the examples of the Kings of *Israel* and *Judah*, viz. *That they exercised Authority in the matters of Religion, &c. and that therefore Christian Magistrates may now, yea and that they ought, so to exercise their Power and Dominion over Christians, as even to force and compel them, as to the manner of the Worship of God ; though it be contrary to their Faith and against their Consciences.*

To which I answer, first ; Do not the Statutes of several Kingdoms in *Christendom* differ, as to the matters of Religion, and their manners and form of Worship ? and have not the Laws for Religion and Worship at sundry times differed, even in this our own Nation, as the Magistrates, or those in power, by which they have been made, have differed in their minds as to their Religion and Worship ? And if the matters of Religion, and the manner of the Worship of God, should be only directed and governed by the Laws and Statutes of men ; May there not then be as many Religions and forms of Worship, or as ma-

ny changes in Religion and Worship, as the Magistrates that differ should please to make?

And if *Christians* are bound actively to submit to the Laws of their *Christian Magistrates*, as to their Religion and Worship, without any further question, though against their consciences; why then have so many Martyrs suffered Martyrdom for their not submitting (otherwise than by suffering) to the Laws for Religion and Worship, which have been made by them, who in their times have been called *Christian Magistrates*?

And as to all the Kings of *Israel*, which reigned after the division of the ten Tribes from the Kingdom of *Judah*, what Authority they exercised in the matters of Religion, was it not to support their Idolatrous Worship, which by the subtilty and craft of *Jeroboam*, was both
 n.12. invented and settled as the Publick Worship of the Kingdom of *Israel*?
 27,28 And to promote Idolatry in Worship, and against the Law of God, were not the Statutes of *Omri* both added and kept, who walked in the
 ing. way of *Jeroboam*, and in his sin, wherewith he made *Israel* to sin? And
 6. as if it had been a light thing to walk in the sin of *Jeroboam*; did not *Ahab* worship *Baal*, and rear up an Altar for *Baal*, in the house of *Baal* which he built in *Samaria*? And is it not signified by the Prophet *Micah*, as the peoples sin against the Lord, that the Statutes of *Omri* were
 rah 6. by them kept, and all the works of the house of *Ahab*, and that they walked in their counsels? And in point of Worship, was not the Lord provoked to anger, by the obedience of the children of *Israel* to the Heathenish Statutes of the Kings of *Israel*, which they had made, 2 Kings 17. 8.
 And would their alledging their Kings Laws, as their Authority for what they did, at all have excused them before the Lord, or pacified
 ing. his Anger against them for it? And was not their sin great, who by
 21. force were driven from following the Lord, to worship at *Dan* and *Bethel*? And, was not *Ephraim* oppressed and broken in judgement, because he willingly walked after the Commandment? And by the
 5.11. Captivity of *Israel*, did not the Lord remove them out of his sight, as well for their persisting in the sins of *Jeroboam*, even until their Capti-
 n.17. vity, as also for their other Idolatries in Worship, viz. their walking
 23. in the Statutes of the Heathen (whom the Lord cast out from before them) and of the Kings of *Israel*, which they had made? And even in the time of *Israels* Apostacy, were there not many of the Lords People, that for Conscience sake could not keep the Statutes of *Omri*, nor the works of the house of *Ahab*; and that walked not in the heathenish Statutes of the Kings of *Israel*, which they had made, as witness the seven thousand in the time of *Elias*, that never bowed their knees to *Baal*? and

And if as Kings, the Commands of any of the Kings of *Judah* were absolute, and to be over the Conscience in the matters of Worship; were not then the Commands of them all, as Kings, absolute, and to be over the Conscience in the matters of Worship? And if the people were bound in Conscience, as in the matters of Worship, actively to submit to their Commands, though against their Consciences, without any further question as to right or wrong; who of them could then escape from being Idolaters, that lived under the Reign of the Idolatrous Princes? for in the Cities of *Judah*, and round about *Jerusalem*, were there not High-Places in their several streets, and appointed unto several services; some of them for the worship of false gods, and others of them for the Worship of the true God, but all contrary to the Law of God, as it is written, *Wo, wo unto thee, saith the Lord, that thou hast also built unto thee an eminent place, and hast made thee an high-place in every street; thou hast built thy high-place at every head of the way, &c.* And were not the Idolatrous Priests, that burnt Incense in the High-Places, ordained by the Kings of *Judah*, which afterwards by *Josiah* were put down, as it is written, *And he put down the Idolatrous Priests, whom the Kings of Judah had ordained to burn Incense in the High-Places in the Cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem, &c.* Exe 23, 2 K 23.

And did not the Kings of *Judah*, as to the matters of Worship, administer their Power differently, as they were diversly affected; for, as there were some that took away the Altars of the strange gods, and destroyed their High-places, and that brake down their Images, and cut down their Groves; so, were there not others that built High-places, and set up Images, and that reared up Altars to *Baalim*, and made Groves, and that walked in the wayes of the house of *Ahab*? As there were some who did that which was righteous in the sight of the Lord, by their reforming the abuses of their fore-fathers, as *Hezekiah* and *Josiah* and others; so, were there not others who did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and more especially, as to the matters of Religion and Worship, and that walked in the wayes of the Kings of *Israel*, as *Jehoram*, *Ahaziah* and others? And did not the Lord bring *Judah* low, for the sake of *Ahaz* their King, who transgressed sorely against the Lord? for, did not *Ahaz* make *Judah* naked? which by some is read, *he withdrew in Judah the Worship of God.* And, when he had shut the doors of the House of the Lord; did he not make him Altars in every corner of *Jerusalem*, and High-places in every several City of *Judah*? And of *Jehoram* is it not said, That he made High-places in the Mountains of *Judah*, and caused the Inhabitants of *Jeru-*

21. *salem to commit Fornication, and compelled Judah thereto. And of Ma-*
 16. *asseh* is it not said, That he made Judah to sin with his Idols, and the
 on *Inhabitants of Jerusalem to err? and that he seduced them to more evil*
than did the Nations, whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel?

And even among the good Kings of Judah, though *Asa* and *Jehoshaphat* took away the Altars of the strange gods, and brake down their High-places, &c. yet by them were there not left standing other high-places, which by the Law of *Moses* should have been demolished? and is it not recorded as their remissness, that they were not by them demolished? Howbeit they forc'd none, no not to sacrifice to the true God, in the high-places, but suffered it in those that did. And although *Jehoash*, *Amaziah*, *Azariah* and *Jorham*, did many things that were right in the sight of the Lord; yet, did not they all leave standing the high-places? and under their Reigns and Government, did not the people still sacrifice and burn Incense in the high-places, which by the Law of God was not lawful for them to do, but in the Temple only?

And as to the courage and fidelity of *Hezekiah*, and the zeal and piety of *Josiah*, and their more thorow Reformation, so much spoken of; to wit, their throwing down the high-places, as well those, which by the former Reformers were left standing, as those which after were built; and their breaking down the Altars, and casting out the Images; and their countenancing the true Worshippers, and encouraging the Worship of God, according to the Law and Covenant of God: all which, as aforesaid, is objected by some, as examples for Christian Magistrates to follow, and for them therefore to exercise their Authority as to matters of Religion.

To which I answer. If the Lord put it into the hearts of Christian Magistrates, so far to tread in the steps of the good Kings of Judah, as to encourage the true Worship of God, which is in Spirit and in Truth, and not after the inventions of men; and to protect God's true Worshippers in their Worship of God, and to exercise their Authority for the removing the heaps of high-places in *Christendom*, which neither were built either by pattern or Command from God, and for the demolishing of their eminent places, with their Altars within them, and Popish Images about them, who of the Lord's People would be grieved therewith? for which reade *2 Chron.* 34. 3, 4. *2 Kings* 23. & 18. 4. *2 Chron.* 30. 14. *Numb.* 33. 52. *Deut.* 7. 5. & 12. 2, 3. And, as before it is observed, Was it not recorded as the remissness of the former good Kings of Judah, That the High-places were not removed, though in them the people sacrificed to the true God only?

But did those good Magistrates and Reformers in the Church and Commonwealth of *Judah*, at all prescribe to God his Worship? or, did they administer their Power, for the execution of their own wills, concerning the Worship of God? Was not their Authority by them exercised for the establishment of the Law of God, and his Ordinances for his Worship and Service, according as by *Moses* was declared and written before them; and for the keeping of God's Testimonies, which by God was testified in his Spirit by his Prophets, and in their own consciences? For, did not *Iosiah* make a Covenant before the Lord, *To walk after the Lord, and to keep his Commandments, and his Testimo- 2 Ch*
nies, and his Statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, and to per- 34
form the words of the Covenant, which were written in the Book that was
found in the House of the Lord? And of *Hezekiah* is it not said, *That 2 Ki*
he clave to the Lord, and departed not from following him, but kept his Com- 18
mandments, which the Lord commanded Moses? And of *Iehosaphat* is it *2 Ch*
not said, That he sought to the Lord God of his Father, and walked in his 17
Commandments, and not after the doings of Israel? And when *Asa* had taken away the Altars of the strange gods, and the High-places, &c. did not he command *Judah*, or rather, as it is in some Translation, *he 2 Ch*
said unto Judah, that they should seek the Lord God of their Fathers, and 14
do after the Law and Commandments? And was not the uprightness of their hearts such, as to the Lord, his Law and Commands, to them in what they did, as that their Commands by the people were obeyed as the words and Commandments of God? as it is written, *2 Chr. 29. 15.*
And they gathered their Brethren, and sanctified themselves, and came ac-
ording to the Commandment of the Kings by the words of the Lord, &c. for they in their Commands obeying the Word of the Lord, the Hand of the Lord was so upon the people, as that they obeyed their Commands as the Word of the Lord; as it is written, *2 Chr. 30. 12.* Also in *Judah* the Hand of God was to give them one heart to do the Commandment of the King, and of the Princes, by the Word of the Lord.

But to conclude, both as to Christian Magistrates, and also as to Heathen Magistrates; If Heathen Magistrates command Christians, even in the matters of Religion; the Commandments of the Lord only, and not their own, against their Lords; are they not even by Christians to be submitted unto for the Lords sake? And if Christian Magistrates command Christians, even as to the Worship of God, the Commandments of Christ answering to the Witness of Christ in their consciences that are to obey, and not by carnal compulsion, or the force of man, against their Faith and Consciences, are they not by Christians to be obeyed, yea, and even for Conscience sake? But if the Commands of Magistrates (whether as to their profession they be either Heathens or Christians) be contrary to the Commands of God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, and against the Faith and Consciences of Gods faithful and true Worshipers, in this case, is not the Lord rather to be obeyed than Men?